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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 27 | Min 17 | Humidity 86% Partly cloudy sky Sensex 76,724 | Nifty 23,213 | Gold 80,070 | Silver 93,500 | Dollar 86.36 | Euro 89.03 | GBP 105.56

Gone case

CITY PAGE 3

Vehicles parked outside homes or PG accommodations easy targets for thieves, police reveal as crackdown intensifies

Weak day

CITY PAGE 4

Citizens seek public grievances meetings organised by BBMP be held on Saturdays to increase participation

63 raids on Andar Bahar games led to seizure of property worth ₹2.53 crore — this old form of gambling is yet to be rooted out, even as the devil has come in new online forms to destroy lives in city

HOUSE OF CARDS

Clubs may have shut, but homes and outdoors still host illegal activity

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The illegal gambling game, Andar-Bahar, though seemingly innocuous, is wreaking havoc on the lives of countless individuals in Bengaluru. Despite stringent measures by law enforcement, such as the Central Crime Branch (CCB) conducting 63 raids last year and arresting 650 individuals, this underground activity continues to thrive as revealed by the staggering seizure of property worth ₹2.53 crore.

These raids only scratch the surface of an issue that has dug itself into the daily lives of many citizens. Gambling is not confined to dark alleys or secluded rooms; it has also thrived in public spaces and even the city's seemingly innocent street corners and festivals are now breeding grounds for illegal activity. "Gambling clubs are closed, but auto drivers and painters often organise gambling activities, sometimes during festivals," Commissioner of Bengaluru City Police B Dayananda said.

In 2024, CCB intensified its efforts against various illegal gambling activities, conducting numerous raids that led to significant arrests and property seizures. There were 46 raids on cricket betting, resulting in 128 arrests and the recovery of ₹44.90 lakh. The popular Andar-Bahar game was targeted in 63 raids, leading to 650 arrests and the seizure of ₹2.53 crore worth of property. Race betting accounted for 13 raids, with 119 individuals arrested and ₹3.50 crore confiscated. Meanwhile,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

> **Gambling, in all its forms, is highly damaging. If a person with a low income starts gambling, it can ruin their life and push their entire family onto the streets**
>
> —Senior police official

BM STANDS FOR CITY OF LAKES

GRAB THAT LAND

Today, we look at how illegal construction is going on in buffer zone of Varthur Lake just years after it was desilted

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Varthur Lake was rejuvenated at an estimated cost of Rs 119 crore recently. Now, some illegal structures are being constructed in the buffer zone of the lake.

Residents of Varthur and environmentalists were happy when the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) took up desilting of the lake four years ago. The BDA spent Rs 119 crore for the removal of the silt. Everybody expected authorities to take measures to preserve the lake after desilting was over. However, Varthur Lake, as like other lakes in and around the city, is expected to join the list of neglected and abandoned lakes soon.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Jump into comic world

The 12th edition of Comic Con is back in Bengaluru with an exciting lineup featuring celebrity guests, exclusive merchandise with comics, cosplay, gaming & more, iconic publishing houses, and an amazing lineup of Indian and international artists giving you a celebration like no other. **Where: KTPO Whitefield; When: January 18 & 19, 11 am onwards**

02 Pet-friendly breakfast

The Yard and Heads Up For Tails presents a specially curated breakfast for pet parents and their furry companions. The event also includes activities such as paw painting, polaroid pictures, and plenty of pet-friendly goodies. A portion of the proceeds goes to a local animal rescue group and hosting a puppy adoption pen. **Where: The Yard, Whitefield; When: January 18, 8 am to 11 am**

03 Watch and care

Aviraam-documentary screening by Asambhava Shubha & a fundraiser prelude to Swaraanubhuti—a musical concert for Palliative Care. Aviraam, meaning in continuum or without pause, is a short film about discovering a sense of belonging between two strangers. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: January 18, 6 pm**

04 Thai experience

Thailand Week 2025 at Orion Mall @ Brigade Gateway will feature 24 prominent Thai exhibitors across four primary categories, including food and beverage, health & beauty, household products, and fashion & accessories. The event will also host an engaging array of authentic Thai cultural performances and culinary demonstrations. Entry is free. **Where: Orion Mall @ Brigade Gateway; When: January 17 to 19**

05 Theatre act

Bali: The Sacrifice, written by Girish Karnad and directed by Arundhati Raja. This production of Girish Karnad's play takes you through one night of pathos, anger, and laughter, unravelling barriers of caste and religious beliefs.
Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar
When: January 19, 3:30 pm & 7:30 pm

Sharp strings, broken wings: Manja menace strikes again

City-based rescue centres attend 100+ rescue calls over last 5 days, note rise in cases involving rare bird species

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'Between January 10 and 14, ARRC received 76 manja cases across the city & PfA rescued 18 birds from these deadly threads'

City-based animal rescue centres say they are inundated with calls to rescue birds entangled in kite threads or sustained injuries from razor-sharp manjas (glass-coated kite strings). Two major animal rescue centres in the city—Avian and Reptile Rehabilitation Centre (ARRC) and People for Animals (PfA)—have attended nearly a hundred rescue calls over the last five days.

Between January 10 and 14, while ARRC received 76 manja cases across the city, PfA rescued 18 birds from these killer threads. "Last year, in the week leading to the kite festival, we rescued 14 birds from manja thread. This year, we have rescued 18 birds. There is no change in the amount of glass-coated or nylon threads being used for kite flying in Bengaluru despite the government's notification," said Dr (Colonel) Nawaz Shariff, chief veterinarian, PfA Wildlife Hospital.

Notably, in October this year, the Karnataka government issued a notification banning Chinese manja or any other non-cotton thread used for kite flying, with immediate effect. Animal rescue centres said, on the contrary, this year, an increase in cases involving rare bird species, such as the mottled wood owl and ibis, as well as migratory raptors like the booted eagle, changeable hawk eagle, and peregrine falcon, getting caught in manja has been reported.

Discarded manja: A year-round threat

ARRC is said to have received more than 200 cases of manja rescue this year alone. According to the centre, the issue of manja extends far beyond the festivities of Sankranti. It poses a year-round threat to the city's birds, bats, and other wildlife. Between October 2024 and Wednesday, ARRC has received more than a thousand calls for manja-related bird rescues.

The primary danger lies not in the immediate act of kite flying but in the aftermath, when discarded manja gets entangled in trees and other structures, creating lasting hazards for local wildlife. "In December 2024, we conducted 389 manja rescues. This highlights that manja is a year-round problem. Due to its non-biodegradable nature, manja remains in the environment long after it has been discarded. Throughout the year, we see a variety of animals, including kites, crows, owls, flying foxes, and pond herons, becoming trapped in the string. Occasionally, parakeets and barbets are also affected," said Subiksha Venkatesh, rescue manager, ARRC.

What should be done?

The centres say the authorities should restrict the sale and usage of manja, as well as its manufacturing. There should be strict enforcement of the recent state government circular, along with the creation of a hotline for reporting the sale or availability of dangerous kite strings.

"While we continue to confiscate illegal manja, we need more support from government agencies and the community to effectively tackle this problem at the scale required. We have developed an online app to track manja hotspots across the city. This app allows residents to volunteer as "Manjha Warriors," monitoring these areas to identify when cleanups are needed or when birds may be trapped," added Venkatesh.

Wildlife rescuers and experts say that citizens can take several simple yet effective actions to combat this issue. Whether cotton or manja, the strings should be disposed of safely, similar to a plastic bottle. If citizens spot significant amounts of manja in their areas, they can get in touch with the rescue centres for a cleanup drive to prevent further harm to wildlife.

Over 40 citizens march through city's military history on Army Day

Army veterans, history-enthusiast civilians took part in this 15-km walk that covered several landmarks in Bengaluru

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Over 40 citizens set off at 6:30 am on Wednesday for a 15-km walk through the city to commemorate Army Day. The themed walk covered several landmarks and locations of significance to the city's proud military history.

Curated and led by Arun Pai, founder of BangaloreWALKS, the mixed group of army veterans and history-seeking civilians started the walk at the Tejas Fighter Jet on Cubbon Road and took a route that included the National Military Memorial, the FM Manekshaw Parade Ground, the Gallantry Walkway, the FM Cariappa Park, the Supply Depot, the War Memorial, the Rashtriya Military School, the Corps of Military Police, followed by an 8 km loop of the entire campus of ASC (South) and ASC (North) in Koramangala and Ejipura.

The highlight of the walk was a special wreath-laying ceremony at the stunning 74-foot high Veeragallu at the National Military Memorial. The participants soaked in the military history visible at literally every corner of this well-planned route through the city's cantonment area and were exposed to facets of the city's history that most people are unaware of. The presence of several veterans enriched the walk as they provided interesting anecdotes from their storied careers.

"It was very touching to have so many veterans on the walk," Pai said, adding that Shakunthala Bhandarkar, a Veer Naari whose husband was martyred in 1999, arranged wreath-laying ceremonies with Metamorph Foundation at the two memorials, giving citizens a chance to commemorate our fallen heroes. "It is an honour to pay tribute to those armed personnel who sacrificed their lives while protecting the country. I could walk 5 km. During the walk, we came to know many things under the guidance of Pai," said Bhandarkar. Sowmya S, the wife of a Navy officer, added, "We paid tribute at the National Military Memorial. Some of the walkers have also joined us to pay tributes to the armed forces. We wanted the authorities concerned to open the National Military Memorial for the public."

The entire walk was conducted on the footpaths as part of the BLR Footpath Challenge and was supported by BBMP (East Zone), with Marshals (former army veterans themselves) present along the route. The entire 15-km route was rated as 'mostly walkable'—it was excellent in several places (with 8-10 lane footpath widths available), clean and walkable in most areas, while a few sections on Inner Ring Road and in Austin Town needed repairs and improvement.

Army Day being celebrated at Veeragallu on Wednesday

Vehicles parked outside homes, PGs become easy theft target

18 arrested, 115 stolen vehicles worth ₹90 lakh recovered

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(File photo) Stolen vehicles are often used in other crimes

"Majority of these thefts occured in residential areas, with nearly 90% of incidents taking place when vehicles were parked outside houses or PG accommodations –B Dayananda, Commissioner of Police

Police officials revealed that a majority of the vehicle thefts occur from right outside houses or paying guest accommodations where they are parked at night. Police apprehended 18 persons and recovered 115 stolen 2-wheelers, four auto-rickshaws and a car, it was revealed during a press conference on Wednesday.

"A majority of these thefts occurred in residential areas, with nearly 90% of incidents taking place when vehicles were parked outside houses or near PG accommodations," Commissioner of Police for Bengaluru City B Dayananda said.

Dayananda explained that vehicle theft has been a top priority for the department, with operations carried out last year as well. He noted that many stolen vehicles are often used for other criminal activities. Among the arrested, nearly eight individuals have a history of involvement in crime. Given their repeated offenses, the police are in discussions with authorities regarding the cancellation of their bail.

The cases

Rajagopalnagar Police arrested a man linked to a series of two-wheeler thefts across the city. The investigation began after a theft near KDDL Factory in Peenya Industrial Area on December 26. On January 8, 2025, the police tracked the suspect to JCL Junction, Peenya 2nd Phase, and recovered the stolen vehicle.

Further questioning revealed his involvement in multiple thefts across Rajagopalanagar, Peenya, Malleswaram, and Bommanahalli. The police recovered 30 stolen two-wheelers worth ₹26.5 lakh, including vehicles from Basaveshwar KSRTC Bus Stand and Laggere.

Vehicle theft crackdown involved coordinated efforts across multiple police stations. Victim complaints led to suspect arrests, uncovering their involvement in numerous thefts.

On January 10, Girinagar Police arrested a man near BDA Park, Avalahalli, for stealing a two-wheeler, leading to the recovery of 12 more vehicles worth ₹7.03 lakh. Following interrogation, the suspect revealed his role in numerous thefts throughout the city, solving eight cases in total.

A few days earlier, on January 6, Girinagar Police had arrested another suspect linked to a stolen vehicle case dating back to September 2024. This led to the discovery of five additional stolen bikes, valued at ₹1.95 lakh. Meanwhile, Banaswadi Police had also scored a major victory on December 25, 2024, arresting three individuals involved in a widespread two-wheeler theft ring, recovering seven bikes worth ₹5 lakh. Their efforts tied them to several other thefts.

On January 7, 2025, Nandini Layout Police seized 11 stolen vehicles from a single individual, though their exact value is still under investigation.

At Madiwala Police Station, a man was apprehended for stealing auto rickshaws and two-wheelers following a complaint on December 14, 2024. The police tracked the thief to Koramangala on December 27, recovering eight two-wheelers and two auto rickshaws worth ₹13 lakh. The accused confessed to multiple thefts across Bengaluru, and investigations are ongoing to trace the owners of the remaining stolen vehicles.

Bellandur Police arrested a thief on January 4, after a vehicle theft complaint was filed on December 30. The accused was linked to multiple thefts, with seven stolen two-wheelers and one auto rickshaw worth ₹4.20 lakh recovered.

JP Nagar police arrested three individuals on November 22, for stealing two-wheelers and gold jewellery. They recovered 72 grams of gold jewellery and seven stolen vehicles worth ₹8 lakh.

At Talaghattapura Police Station, a man was arrested for serial property thefts. The police seized 40 grams of gold jewellery and six stolen vehicles valued at ₹8 lakh, solving several cases across the city. Basavanagudi Police arrested a man who used to steal cars and two-wheelers.

POCSO case: BSY must face trial, state govt tells HC

Court aims to conclude hearing before Feb 2, with a Senior Counsel presenting Yediyurappa defence on Jan 17

Karnataka government requested the High Court on Wednesday, to reject the petition by former Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa, who sought to nullify the criminal case filed against him under the POCSO Act for allegedly sexually assaulting a minor girl in February last year.

During the hearing before Justice M Nagaprasanna, Senior Counsel Ravi Varma Kumar, representing the Karnataka CID (Criminal Investigation Department), emphasised that the sexual assault of a minor was a "heinous" offence, asserting that Yediyurappa must stand trial.

Kumar stated that a petition to quash under Section 482 is not valid in POCSO cases, as there exists a statutory presumption of guilt against the accused.

The Court was conducting final arguments on Yediyurappa's petition to dismiss the FIR regarding the alleged sexual assault incident from February last year.

The Senior Advocate presented the victim's statement and an audio recording from the survivor's mobile, allegedly containing a dialogue between her mother and Yediyurappa after the victim informed her mother about the incident. The recording reportedly captured the mother questioning Yediyurappa about the assault on her minor daughter. The former CM's response suggested he considered the girl like his granddaughter and was merely checking on her.

Justice Nagaprasanna observed that the mother's manner of questioning indicated the incident's likelihood, though he questioned whether the Court could consider statements recorded under Section 161 of the CrPC. Kumar insisted that Yediyurappa should face trial, noting that February 2 would mark one year since the alleged incident.

The Court committed to concluding the hearing before February 2, with Senior Counsel CV Nagesh scheduled to present Yediyurappa's defence on January 17. The case involves allegations that Yediyurappa molested a 17-year-old girl who visited his residence with her mother seeking assistance.

BESCOM officials caught taking bribe

Two BESCOM officials were arrested in Bengaluru for demanding a bribe of ₹3,00,000 to expedite the issuance of a new power connection. The operation was part of a crackdown on corruption, resulting in the swift capture of the culprits.

The case, registered under Cr No 03/2025 u/s 7(a) of the PC Act 1988 (amended in 2018), was initiated following a complaint by Madhu Gowda, a 41-year-old electrical contractor. The accused include Yogaraj L, 41, an Assistant Engineer at BESCOM, and Murali, 42, a private driver outsourced by the company.

According to the complaint, the two officials had delayed providing the new power connection to a newly constructed building in Basavanagar. After several follow-ups, the accused demanded a bribe of ₹3,00,000 to finalise the connection. Murali was caught red-handed while accepting the bribe on the instructions of Yogaraj. The investigation is ongoing, and both accused have been arrested. –BMB

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Low attendance prompts call for tweak in BBMP meet day

Citizens & civic groups are urging officials to shift grievance meetings from Wednesdays to Saturdays, making them accessible to working professionals

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The low attendance at public grievance meetings organised by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) suggests they may not be effectively addressing their purpose. Meetings held on Wednesdays in areas predominantly populated by tech professionals see limited participation, as it is a regular working day for many. There is a growing demand to shift these meetings to Saturdays to enable greater resident participation.

KR Puram Constituency Association Welfare Federation wrote a letter to the BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath requesting to change the day of the grievances meeting from Wednesday to Saturday. "I found that not many residents attended the grievances meeting held last month. There were hardly five residents in the meeting while there were more than 10 officials representing BBMP, BESCOM (Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited), BWSSB (Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board) and the police. We requested the BBMP Chief Commissioner to schedule the grievances meeting on Saturdays instead of Wednesdays," said VP Krishna, Founder, of KR Puram Constituency Association Welfare Federation.

"Hardly 5 residents attended the meeting while over 10 officials from BBMP, BESCOM, BWSSB, and police were present"

He said that the federation has also requested the BBMP Chief Commissioner to consider the rebate on the property tax for retired army personnel, those who plant saplings in front of their homes and self-managed properties on par with village panchayats. "The panchayats provide 50 per cent rebate for the properties owned by ex-servicemen, widows of soldiers, handicapped people, HIV or leprosy-affected people, women self-help groups recognised by the government, residential building with solar power generation units, etc.," he said.

Demanding the BBMP Chief Commissioner to reschedule grievances meeting to Saturday from Wednesday, Nageshwara Rao R, a software engineer from Brindavan Layout, Horamavu, said attending grievances meetings on Saturday will be convenient for techies. "Most of the residents, especially working people, cannot attend the meeting on Wednesday as it is a working day for them. Rescheduling the grievances meeting to Saturday will facilitate more residents attending the meeting," Nageshwara Rao said.

Stating that the Second Saturday of the month would be ideal for conducting grievances meetings, Shivakumar V, Secretary of Domlur Layout Residents' Welfare Association said that the BBMP authorities have fixed Wednesday for conducting grievances meetings for their convenience. "We have also requested the BBMP authorities to conduct grievances meetings on Saturdays to facilitate more and more residents attending the meeting," Shivakumar said.

> **"As Wednesday is working day for most residents, rescheduling meeting will facilitate more residents attending the meeting**
> – Nageshwara R, software engineer

Expressing a similar opinion, Kathyayini Chamaraj, Executive Trustee, CIVIC Bangalore said the schedule of the grievances meeting should be convenient for the public. "Saturdays are ideal to conduct the grievances meetings as Wednesday is a working day," Kathyayini Chamaraj said.

Final call on B'luru South renaming rests with Centre

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When will Ramanagara be renamed as 'Bengaluru South'? The ball is in the Centre's court as Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that the proposed South Bengaluru district name is awaiting final approval from the Union Home Ministry. "Once approved, South Bengaluru will be officially declared a district, while Ramanagara will remain the district headquarters. Don't sell your lands, as property values will rise significantly," he urged.

Although there is a political debate over renaming Ramanagar district as "Bengaluru South", this change will add significant confusion due to the existence of several areas already named Bengaluru South that are not related to each other exactly in terms of power and jurisdiction.

The decision to rename Ramanagar district as Bengaluru South may seem like a routine process, but it has numerous disadvantages for the residents. There are already four places with the name Bengaluru South within the Greater Bengaluru limits - Bengaluru South Lok Sabha constituency which completely covers the southern parts of Bengaluru City, Bengaluru South Assembly constituency, Bengaluru South taluk, and Bengaluru South educational district. Adding Ramanagar to this list exacerbates the confusion.

A political activist said, "Surprisingly, all four existing Bengaluru South entities are outside the boundaries of the newly proposed Bengaluru South district. Ramanagar could have retained its name and still been merged with Bengaluru, or it could have been renamed Kempegowda district. The name change will cause significant difficulties for the public in updating their documents, including Aadhaar, PAN cards, land records, and addresses - a total of 108 documents will need to be corrected.

Tax burden and economic impact

Ramanagar district, spanning 3516 sq km, borders Bengaluru city to the north, Mandya to the south, Tamil Nadu and Bengaluru city to the east, and Tumakuru to the west. The renaming will not only increase land prices but also significantly raise tax rates, registration fees, and stamp duty charges, placing a financial burden on the residents.

Public sentiment

"As children, we knew Bengaluru as a rural district, then it became Ramanagar, and now it's becoming Bengaluru South. This constant renaming creates an identity crisis for the residents. We identify with Ramanagar's rich history and cultural heritage, and changing the name to Bengaluru South dilutes that connection. Moreover, the existing Bengaluru South constituencies and taluks are nowhere near Ramanagara, causing further confusion. Imagine the chaos for someone trying to locate an address or for services that rely on geographical clarity. This isn't just about changing a name; it's about erasing a part of our identity and history. Additionally, the administrative burden of updating countless documents like Aadhaar, PAN cards, land records, and more will be immense. Each renaming comes with a cost - both financial and emotional," said Umesha, a resident of Ramanagar.

Moreover, Union Minister Kumaraswamy has already stated that the district will revert to its original name after this government's term, adding to the uncertainty and instability for the residents. The continuous renaming and the associated administrative changes will only lead to more confusion and inconvenience for the people of the district. However, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that renaming would increase employment opportunities for the people of the district. "The key objective of renaming was to attract more industries and create more employment opportunities," the Minister said.

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Parking woes

Jayanagar

Frequent footpath parking on 36th Cross, 4th T Block, Jayanagar, is a daily nuisance, causing inconvenience to pedestrians.

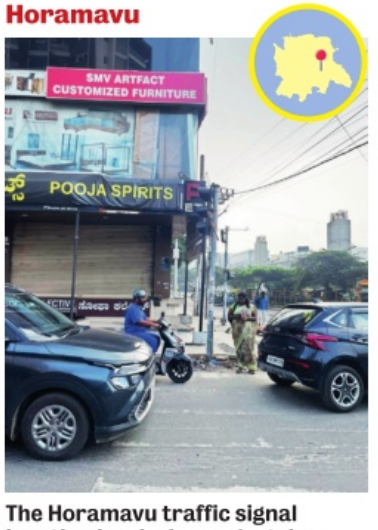
Abandoned vehicle

TC Palya

An outstation car has been abandoned for years across from Garuda Royal Homes, near the Subhas Nagar bus stop at Old Madras Road, TC Palya Junction.

Pedestrian safety

Horamavu



The Horamavu traffic signal junction is missing pedestrian crossing signals at several points, making it difficult and unsafe for pedestrians to cross.

Syllabus is set, get prepped for seamless CET exams

Karnataka Examinations Authority introduces Board of Studies to prevent errors, set a syllabus aligned with prescribed curriculum in this year's CET exam

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Students, along with parents, wait at CET exam centres in 2024

Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) has formed a Board of Studies (BoS) to ensure that past errors in the Common Entrance Test (CET)-2024, where questions outside the prescribed syllabus were included, do not recur this year. Moreover, a well-defined syllabus for the exam has been prepared.

An official said, "With the II PUC schedule finalised and exams set to commence on March 1, KEA has also finalised the CET timetable and syllabus. These will soon be made available on its official website for the benefit of students. Last year, issues arose when questions from outside the syllabus were included, forcing the KEA to exclude such questions during evaluation and announce results accordingly."

Sources said that the Department of Pre-University Education did not provide a syllabus to KEA this year. In response, a BoS chaired by former Vice-Chancellor Professor B Thimmegowda was established. The board comprises 12 subject experts, three for each subject, who are responsible for drafting the question papers. KEA officials clarified that discrepancies in the syllabus coordination between KEA and the PU Department contributed to last year's lapses. The BoS aims to bridge this gap and create a cohesive syllabus and question papers aligned with the prescribed curriculum.

KEA Executive Director H Prasanna assured that the BoS is working diligently to avoid any mishaps this year. "The syllabus and question papers are being meticulously prepared. We will soon release the syllabus on our website for the benefit of students," he added.

Question paper structure

The CET question paper will be formulated by reviewing both I & II PUC textbooks, ensuring a balanced approach. However, over 60% of the questions will be derived from the II PUC syllabus. While designing the questions, a mix of complex, simple, and straightforward formats will be used, similar to the approach in SSLC and PUC question papers. KEA officials stressed that direct questions from PUC textbooks will not be included, and instead, the questions will require students to apply analytical thinking. To avoid confusion, each question will include closely related answer options, requiring in-depth study by students to select the correct one.

> **Syllabus & question papers are being meticulously prepared. We will soon release syllabus on our website for benefit of students**
> –H Prasanna, KEA Executive Director

Clarifications from PU dept

Director of the Pre-University Education Department, Sindhu B Rupesh, stated, "We provided the syllabus to KEA at the start of the academic year. Unlike last year, when there was a 30% reduction in the NCERT syllabus, this year there are no such reductions. The complete syllabus has been shared with KEA."

Lessons from past errors

Learning from last year's issues, the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board has issued directives to ensure that no questions outside the prescribed syllabus are included in the 2025 II PUC question papers. Subject experts have been instructed to strictly adhere to the syllabus and ensure that questions are carefully aligned with specific chapters. They have also been encouraged to modify numerical values in questions to maintain variety and clarity.

Minor raped by online friend: Police urge caution on media use

Police are urging teenagers to exercise caution while responding to messages on social media apps, following a horrific gang rape incident in Belagavi district. A 17-year-old student was reportedly gang-raped in Harugeri Police Station limits recently. Two accused, identified as Abhishek Devanur and Adil Shah, have been arrested in connection with case. Police said that Devanur reportedly became acquainted with the victim through Instagram. Later, he met her in person and established further rapport. On January 3, the victim, along with her friend, went with the accused, who was accompanied by his friends Shah and Kautuk Babu Saheb Badiger. The three men then took the girls to a secluded hilly area near Savadatti and reportedly gang-raped them. They also threatened to release the recorded footage online and also issued death threats should the victims inform the police. Police have registered a case under POCSO Act. — BMB

'Rollback fare hikes, create transport funds'

In a letter to the BMRCL and KSRTC, Greenpeace India has urged them to rollback the proposed fare hikes in both bus and metro operations. The letter highlighted that public transport is an essential lifeline for the city's residents, offering efficient, affordable, and sustainable public transportation. Furthermore, a hike of 40-45% in Metro and 15% in public buses will create a severe financial burden for passengers. The organisation demanded the creation of a dedicated public transport fund, which would ensure annual contributions from both state and national governments. "Rather than increasing fares, the focus should be on having a dedicated annual budget and financial support from the state and union government for operations and maintenance of public transport," said Sharat, a campaigner at Greenpeace India. — BMB

Police strike gold with recoveries worth ₹79.43 lakh

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The number of arrests and amount of gold seized show that the city has witnessed a series of thefts. Stolen valuables including 955 grams of gold, 550 grams of silver, and ₹1.25 lakh in cash, all valued at a staggering ₹79.43 lakh, were recovered by the police in various cases.

Extortion case

A man had retrieved the valuables from bank locker and was walking on the road in front of the bank when two unidentified individuals on a two-wheeler snatched the bag containing the gold jewellery and silver articles, valued at ₹33.10 lakh. A case was registered at the Kothanur Police Station regarding the incident.

After a meticulous investigation, two suspects already in judicial custody for another case were interrogated. They confessed to the crime. On January 6, police seized 324 grams of gold, 100g of silver, and ₹1.10 lakh in cash from the suspects' possession. With this, two extortion cases were resolved, and the accused were remanded to judicial custody.

Serial burglar

In another breakthrough, Begur police arrested a serial house thief involved in multiple burglaries across the city. On December 20, a complainant reported the theft of 55.5 grams of gold and ₹15,000 in cash from his residence. The suspect, apprehended on December 29, confessed to committing thefts in six other cases within Begur and Surya City police limits. Pawn shops in Begur and nearby areas were searched, leading to the recovery of 261 grams of gold jewellery worth ₹18.53 lakh. The accused, remanded to judicial custody on January 10, admitted to mortgaging stolen valuables to fund his activities.

Theft cases

Talaghattapura Police arrested three individuals involved in an abduction and robbery in Banashankari 6th Stage. On December 27, a woman was going to the temple on a scooter and three unknown persons stopped her on a deserted road and snatched her gold mangalya chain and a gold chain with black pearls. The culprits also targeted other victims in Harohalli and RR Nagar.

Acting on informants' tips, the police arrested the trio on January 1. The three accused who were taken into police custody were interrogated at length. The men were also accused of having intercepted a senior citizen couple walking near Harohalli Industrial Area and snatching a gold necklace from the woman's neck. This led to the resolution of five chain snatching cases, and the accused are now in judicial custody.

Female thief nabbed

Hennur Police arrested a woman responsible for multiple house thefts in the city. On December 19, a complaint was lodged about the theft of 172 grams of gold, 450 grams of silver, and ₹13,000 in cash. She was caught near Shani Mahatma Temple on December 29. Her confession led to the recovery of 110 grams of gold jewelry worth ₹7.80 lakh from a pawn shop in Kammanahalli. Police continue to investigate her involvement in other thefts across the city.

State vs Centre: Red flags fly over UGC's draft rules

K'taka opposes UGC draft regulations, citing exclusion of State in Vice-Chancellor appointments; state calls for wider consultation to protect federal rights

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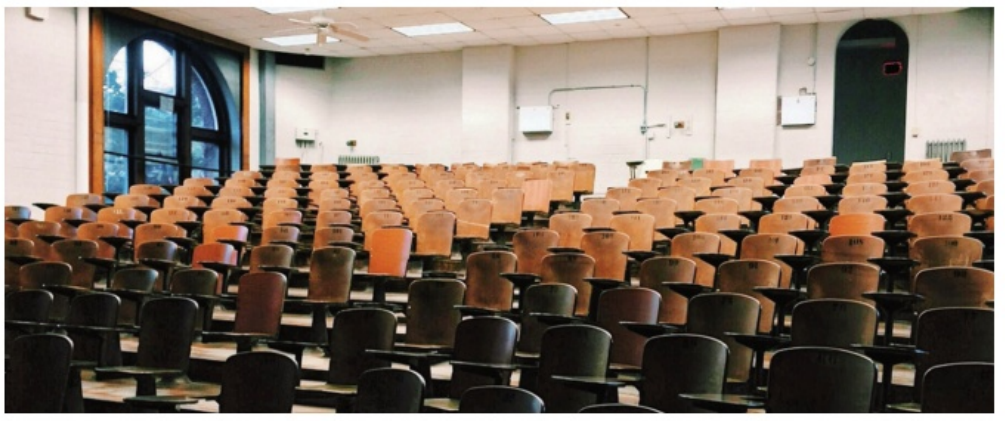
The ongoing tussle between the State and central governments has taken a new turn, with Karnataka strongly opposing the University Grants Commission (UGC) draft regulations for higher education. Following Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's criticism, Higher Education Minister Dr MC Sudhakar wrote to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, raising serious concerns over provisions in the draft rules regarding the appointment of Vice-Chancellors. According to Sudhakar, these provisions not only undermine the federal structure but also erode the legitimate role of State Governments in advancing higher education.



Proposed redulations may limit States' rights and hinder quality education

Higher Education Minister criticises the inclusion of non-academicians as Vice Chancellor candidates, calling it a threat to higher education principles and university autonomy

Key issues in draft regulations

The UGC recently released the draft "UGC (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment and Promotion of Teachers and Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2025" for public consultation. One of the primary points of contention is the exclusion of the State Government from the process of appointing Vice-Chancellors. Sudhakar pointed out that the guidelines propose a search-cum-selection committee appointed solely by the Chancellor or Visitor, with no representation from the State Government. Furthermore, the power to appoint Vice-Chancellors from the recommended panel rests entirely with the Chancellor or Visitor. Any deviation from these guidelines would render appointments null and void, creating a direct conflict with State legislation governing universities.

The inclusion of non-academicians as eligible candidates for Vice-Chancellor positions also drew criticism. Sudhakar argued that such provisions require serious deliberation as they contradict the foundational principles of higher education governance and undermine the autonomy of State-run universities.

Karnataka's role in advancing higher education

Dr Sudhakar emphasised the pivotal role played by the Karnataka Government in shaping the State's higher education landscape. Karnataka boasts a gross enrollment ratio in higher education that surpasses the national average, thanks to substantial investments by the State Government. These include developmental grants for universities, salaries, pensions for permanent staff, and addressing day-to-day administrative and grievance issues of public universities. State universities' activities are regularly debated in the legislature, making the State Government accountable for their administration. Excluding the State from such critical functions, he argued, disregards its contributions and responsibilities, thereby undermining its authority.

Call for wider consultation

Sudhakar reiterated Karnataka's strong opposition to the draft guidelines, stating that they strike at the core of the federal structure by sidelining State Governments in university governance. He argued that the proposed regulations extinguish the rights of States and hinder their responsibility to ensure accessible and quality higher education. Urging the Union Education Minister to withdraw the draft rules immediately, he called for wider consultations with State Governments to collectively strengthen the country's higher education system.

Joint replacement recognition at BMCRI

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The Department of Orthopaedics at Victoria Hospital, BMCRI (Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute), was recently recognised by the Government of Karnataka as a Centre of Excellence for Joint Replacement. The title highlights the department's decade-long dedication to joint replacement surgeries. These surgeries have significantly benefited patients, either at no cost or at a minimal expense.

The Orthopaedic Department serves approximately 450 patients daily and manages an inpatient load of 150. Annually, the department performs around 250 major surgeries and 2,500 minor procedures, including fracture reductions and cast applications. It has conducted around 370 total knee replacements and 165 total hip replacements in the last year.

Dr Sharan Prakash Patil, Minister for Medical Education declared the Orthopaedics Department as 'Centre Of Excellence for Joint Replacement' on January 9 at BMCRI.

Speaking to BM, Dr Ramesh Krishna, Dean and Director of BMCRI, who is also a Professor of Orthopaedics and Joint Replacement Surgeon, said, "We have been performing joint replacement surgeries for the past 8-10 years, averaging around 350 procedures annually. These include various types of surgeries such as total hip replacement, Hemi hip replacement, and total knee replacement surgeries."

Most of the patients seen at the hospital are elderly individuals, particularly those over 60 years old, suffering from osteoarthritis or Rheumatoid arthritis. These conditions are more common in women, likely due to lower physical activity levels. In elderly patients, hip fractures are often challenging to heal, so we opt for hemi or total hip replacement surgeries.

Dr Ramesh Krishna added, "We also see younger patients with Rheumatoid arthritis and numerous cases of bone fractures caused by road traffic accidents. Apart from 150-200 fracture cases getting treated in the OPD, about 8-10 fracture cases get admitted daily & 10-12 cases are operated daily in both emergency & Elective operation theatres. Our department matches the quality and volume of surgeries performed at any of the corporate hospitals."

The Department of Orthopaedics is also running fellowship courses in arthroplasty (joint replacement) for young Orthopaedic Surgeons, providing specialised training in joint replacement techniques. Our recognition as a Centre of Excellence aims to train orthopaedic surgeons, nurses, physiotherapists from other hospitals.

Dusk parade of elephant flouts wildlife rules

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Wildlife conservationists and researchers in Karnataka have urged stricter regulations to ensure the welfare of captive elephants in the state.

The debate on the protection of captive elephants has reignited after an alleged video of an elephant being used in a temple in Shivamogga on January 13 has surfaced and is being circulated on social media sites.

Wildlife activists allege the elephant was paraded for a festival during dusk, not advisable as per guidelines by the Elephant Task Force (ETF) or rules under the Wildlife (Protection) Act (WLPA), 1972.

"The elephant was made to work under stress. Clearance for the parade was given by a senior official from the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences department and permission to use the elephant was given by a Karnataka Forest department official. The temple has paraded the elephant after dusk, which is not allowed as per rules," allege Joseph Hoover, former State Board of Wildlife member and founder of the United Conservation Movement and Charitable Trust.

"As per WLPA and ETF guidelines for the welfare and management of captive elephants, they cannot be paraded after 6 pm. Special permission is required in this case, which is based on these rules and guidelines. In case of violations, the elephant can be confiscated by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the state forest department," said a city-based wildlife activist.

Guidelines forbid parading captive elephants post 6pm

Conservationists say the provisions of the WLPA relating to the upkeep of captive elephants or guidelines given by ETF are not rigorously followed in the state.

They underline that although special district-level committees were formed a few years ago to ensure better management of captive elephants, the committees have been only on paper.

The instruction to formulate district-level captive elephant monitoring welfare committees was given by the Supreme Court more than six years ago. The committee comprises a member appointed by the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) and officials from the Karnataka Forest Department.

"I received a letter from AWBI a few years ago stating that I am an AWBI-appointed member of one such committee. However, I was never called for any meetings. The district-level committees should be revived to ensure any such lapses in the welfare of captive elephants are addressed diligently," said a city-based conservationist.

Considering various recent incidents highlighting violations of ETF guidelines and WLPA rules, Karnataka should revisit captive elephant guidelines and come up with stricter rules.

"We come across cases of elephants in Kerala going berserk during religious festivals because the state has a considerable number of male elephants that are unpredictable and become uncontrollable. However, Karnataka mostly has female elephants. ETF guidelines and WLPA rules in the state are openly violated during festivals but the events largely remain incidentless due to this reason," said Ramesh Belagere, a wildlife researcher at the Foundation of Ecology and Education Development.

Leopard deaths: Activists allege inaction by officials

Wildlife activists write to CM demanding action against offenders following death of 2 leopards in Dec 2024; FIR is filed, probe is underway in both cases, say KFD officials

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The written complaint also demands an immediate inquiry against negligent forest officers

After two leopards were allegedly killed by locals in Karnataka over the last two weeks, wildlife activists have raised the issue, demanding action against offenders. In written complaints sent to the Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Forest Minister Eshwar B Khande, activists have alleged that the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) has failed to take action against the offenders. However, KFD officials say FIRs have been registered in both cases, and the cases are being duly investigated.

In the written complaint, Joseph Hoover, former State Board of Wildlife member and founder of the United Conservation Movement and Charitable Trust stated that it is baffling that KFD officials have not pursued deaths of the Schedule I species. "While two leopards have been killed in a short period, the department has failed to take action against the offenders. This is despite the owner of a poultry farm, a veterinarian by profession, poisoning poultry and strewing it around his farm to kill the leopards. The government should immediately call for an inquiry against the negligent forest officers," said Hoover in his complaint.

> **"FIRs, in both cases, were registered on same day. We have identified 2 accused in first case. In second case, owners of poultry farm are absconding**
> – Dr KN Basavaraja, Mysuru DCF

As per the report, while one leopard died due to injuries sustained from snares near Manthakali in Mysuru, another was poisoned in Marballi village, Kabini. Both incidents took place in December 2024.

FIR filed, investigations ongoing: Officials

Mysuru Deputy Conservator of Forest Dr KN Basavaraja told BM, "FIRs, in both instances, were registered on the same day. The first case is regarding the death of a leopard due to injuries sustained from snaring. Immediately after we received the information, a team of veterinarians rushed to the spot, and the animal was taken to the veterinary care unit. The leopard survived for two to three days but later succumbed to the injuries. We followed the procedures as per the Wildlife (Protection) Act, filed an FIR, and gave a complaint to the judicial magistrate on the same day. We have identified two accused in the case, and they have been called for inquiry."

According to Dr Basavaraja, an FIR has been filed in the case of the death of the second leopard, and an investigation is in progress. "In the second case, we were suspicious about the location of the incident. Thus, we used sniffer dogs from Bandipur Tiger Reserve. The dogs tracked the smell to a poultry farm in the village. At the farm, we recovered bird carcasses that were poisoned. We have also confiscated containers laced with poison. All these samples have been sent to a lab for testing. The owners of the poultry farm have been booked. However, they are absconding, and thus no arrest has been made so far," Dr Basavaraja added.

Man missing or murdered?

The mysterious death of 30-year-old dog breeder Guna, a resident of Kempegowda Layout in RK Hegde Nagar, has raised questions after he was last seen entering a flat in an apartment in Gummanahalli, Bagalur, on Friday.

The wife of the deceased lodged a missing complaint at a local police station on January 10, seeking assistance in locating her husband. She reported that Guna left their home around 12.30 pm, stating that he would meet the client to collect money. However, he did not return home by evening. She then approached Chandru (last seen with Guna), who revealed that Guna had gone inside a flat on the 7th floor, leaving him waiting in the parking lot. He is said to have called Guna's phone hours later, only to have an unknown person answer it. According to sources, CCTV footage from the 7th floor showed the flat's occupant, Brijesh, along with another individual, moving a body wrapped in a blood-soaked blanket at 8.46 pm on the day. Bagalur police have registered a case under IPC Sections 302 and 201. **–BMB**

Journalist, kin held for worker's death

A journalist and his relative have been arrested for allegedly torturing and beating a 45-year-old labourer, Siddaraju, to death at their farmhouse in Hurulihalli village, Nelamangala, on Saturday. The accused, Manjunath (34), the farmhouse owner, and Ravikumar (39), a senior reporter with a TV channel, are accused of attacking Siddaraju, accusing him of stealing coconuts. They repeatedly assaulted him, including kicking him in the private parts which led to his death. After Siddaraju fell unconscious, his son was notified, but despite being rushed to the hospital, he died from his injuries. Investigations revealed that Siddaraju had worked at the farm for six months without pay and was often beaten by the accused, who also mistreated him due to his caste. The duo fled after hearing of his death but were arrested by the Nelamangala Rural Police on Wednesday. **–BMB**

Docs report staggering rise in PCOS/PCOD cases among teens

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The incidence of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) and Polycystic Ovarian Disease (PCOD) among adolescents aged 15-19 years has seen a staggering rise in recent years.

Dr Teji Dawane, Motherhood Hospitals, said that while previously, only 1 in 10 girls were affected, now 8 in 10 girls are diagnosed with either obesity or lean PCOS. "The rising cases of PCOS/PCOD among teenagers can be attributed to multiple factors, including lifestyle changes, dietary habits, environmental influences, and increased screen time. Social media also plays a role, promoting unrealistic beauty standards, which leads to body image issues and unhealthy dietary choices. Additionally, hormonal imbalances triggered by stress and early menarche (as early as 8-9 years) may contribute to the prevalence," Dr Dawane said.

PCOD and PCOS are often mistaken for each other but differ significantly in severity and impact. PCOD is a less severe condition where the ovaries release immature or partially mature eggs, leading to the formation of multiple ovarian follicles. It is generally manageable through lifestyle changes such as diet and exercise. In contrast, PCOS is a more severe metabolic disorder characterised by hormonal imbalances, insulin resistance, and chronic inflammation. While PCOD primarily affects ovarian function, PCOS has systemic effects, often leading to long-term health complications.

'Maintaining a sleep schedule, managing stress, etc is crucial'

Dr Vidya V Bhat, Radhakrishna Multispeciality Hospital, pointed out that the complications leading to it are Type 2 diabetes, infertility due to anovulation, increased risk of cardiovascular diseases, endometrial hyperplasia or cancer due to unopposed estrogen, mental health disorders, including depression and anxiety.

Some of the common symptoms are irregular menstrual cycles, excessive hair growth (hirsutism) or hair thinning (androgenic alopecia), acne, weight gain or difficulty losing weight, darkened patches of skin (acanthosis nigricans), mood swings and fatigue. "This trend of increasing cases has been noted in urban and semi-urban areas over the last decade due to increased awareness and access to diagnostic tools. Some of the lifestyle habits to improve these conditions are regular physical activity (e.g., yoga, walking, strength training), following a balanced, low-glycemic-index diet, maintaining a consistent sleep schedule, managing stress through mindfulness or relaxation techniques," Dr Bhat added.

Preventing long-term complications of PCOS and PCOD requires early intervention and proactive management. "Regular health check-ups and awareness campaigns play a crucial role in ensuring early diagnosis, enabling timely treatment. Lifestyle modifications, including maintaining a healthy weight, engaging in regular exercise, and following a balanced diet. Medical supervision is equally important to address hormonal imbalances and mitigate risks with appropriate medications when necessary. Mental health support is vital for addressing body image concerns and psychological distress, which are often associated with these conditions. Additionally, monitoring hormonal balance can significantly reduce the risk of fertility issues and metabolic disorders, ensuring better long-term outcomes for affected individuals," added Dr Dawane.

Don't bet your life on it

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

25 raids on Matka gambling led to 42 arrests and a recovery of ₹7.40 lakh. Video games and online poker operations were also exposed in four raids, resulting in 41 arrests and ₹2.50 lakh seized.

Dayananda said that while much has been done to curb street gambling and house-based activities, the shift toward online gambling presents a new challenge. "We've seen a trend where card games are transitioning to online platforms, where people are losing large sums of money. Whenever we receive information, we take strict action and also conduct awareness programmes," he said.

However, police data from 2024 highlights the widespread prevalence of illegal gambling activities in the city. A total of 48 cases of Matka/OC were registered, leading to the arrest of 111 individuals. Gambling topped the list with 335 cases and 2,371 arrests, (1,264 were arrested for street gambling and 1,026 for house gambling till October 2024) reflecting its deep-rooted presence. Cricket betting accounted for 76 cases, with 118 individuals apprehended, while online betting saw nine cases and 16 arrests.

Senior police officials are concerned about the social impact of these illegal activities. "It's not just the loss of money that's the problem," a police officer noted. "When people lose control, it leads to petty thefts, domestic violence, and other criminal activities. It's a cascading effect that begins with a simple card game."

Gambling has ingrained itself into the social fabric in certain areas, often disguised as part of tradition or harmless recreation. However, the police warn that any form of gambling is inherently destructive, especially when individuals with limited means get drawn into it.

"We shouldn't encourage organised gambling. The number of statistics doesn't reveal the full extent—it's just FIRs registered and actions taken. The issue is deeply rooted in society. Gambling, in all its forms, is highly damaging. If a person with a low income starts gambling, it can ruin their life and push their entire family onto the streets," said a senior police official.

DCP of South Division Lokesh B Jagalasar explained that many individuals involved in gambling end up taking excessive loans to feed their addiction, often at exorbitant interest rates. These loans are not from regulated financial markets, and the interest rates are so high that they lead right to a debt trap. To escape this, people are forced to mortgage their properties, wiping out their savings. Gambling activities take place in various locations, sometimes in open areas, apartments, clubs, or even farmhouses, he said.

Legal recourse

The legal framework to address this issue is enshrined in The Karnataka Police Act, 1963, that addresses the regulation of gaming through its Sections 78, 80, and 87, targeting activities in various public domains. Section 78 focuses on gaming in public streets, prohibiting gambling activities in such areas to maintain public order. Section 80 extends this regulation to common gaming houses, where gambling operations are conducted, making it illegal to run or participate in such establishments. Section 87 further broadens the scope, addressing gaming in public places, including streets, thoroughfares, racecourses, and any area accessible to the public.

Despite the continued efforts of law enforcement, the battle against gambling in Bengaluru is far from over. However, the police are taking a strong stance against these crimes. "It has always been a priority for the city police to tackle such activities, and they are also taking action against the owners of premises used for illegal gambling. Our goal is not only to catch the perpetrators but also to raise awareness and educate people about the risks involved," Jagalasar added.

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I, Gounti Durga Satyanarayana, S/o Gopalarao R/o No. 207, 2nd Floor, Sri Sai Himaja apartment, Near Duo Heights aarch, Devarachikkanahalli, Bengaluru - 560068 have changed my name from Gountz Durga Satyanarayana to Gounti Durga Satyanarayana for all future purposes.

I, Jayashree Raghuram Mangalore Resident At No 31, 7th Cross, Hebbal Dasarahalli Main Road, Bhuvaneshwari Nagar, HA Farm Post, Bengaluru-560024 have changed my name to JAYASHREE HEGDE vide affidavit dated 10.01.2024 Sworn before notary: D Sarala Kumari, Bangalore

I, MUTAHER SHARIFF S/O WAJEED MUQTAR, R/O NO 984/4, MANAVARDE KAVAL,TALAGHATTAPURA, Bangalore south, Bengaluru, Karnataka- 560062. Have changed my name to M D MUTAHAR SHARIF for all future purposes.

I, Mamidisetty Lakshmi Sravanthi R/o 7-3, Rayudu vari veedhi, Ravavaram, Chellur, Konaseema Dist 533261 present camp Bengaluru have changed my name to Mamidisetti Lakshmi Sravanthi Affidavit Dt.15/01/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Lakshmi Chitekodach Babu R/o C-101, R1 block, Vakil wishpering woods, Marsur, Anekal Tq, B'luru 562106 have changed my name to Lakshmi Chittekodath Babu Affidavit Dt.15/01/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Padmini Kanakaraj W/o late Vheejay Jayannandaan R/o #14, 4th Cross, 5th Main Ramachandrappa Layout Kariyanapalya Lingaraja - puram B'lore-560084 have changed my name to Padmini Vheejay for all purposes.

I Elezabeth W/O, A Irudayaraj R/O GF A1 NFS Signature 34 4th Cross 2nd Main Parkurthi Layout Babusabpalya Bangalore: 560043 Near Logos Church have changed my name to Elizabeth S. My date of birth is 11/03/1944.

I, Ahmed Mustafa Mohamed R/o 7/6 Panchala Ankanna Police Road Cross Manavarthipet, Bengaluru - 560053 have changed my minor daughter's name from Arshia Fatimah to Arshia Fatimah Ahmed.

I, M.SUSHEELA LINGAIAH, R/a.#15, 17th Crs, Magadi Road,Vijayanagar, Bangalore-40. I, have Changed my name to M. SUSHEELA, Vide affidavit, dated 09/01/2025 Sworn before Notary: Deepa.M . Bangalore

I, Apeksha Akolekar w/o Aniket Kibey #8034, Sobha Silicon Oasis Hosa Road, Electronics City,B'luru-560100 have changed my name to Apeksha Kibey for all purposes

I, Shreyanka Sujay Naidu S/o Sathya Priyanandan M R/o No 3987 3Rd Cross Shankar Nagar Mandya 571401 have changed my name to Shreyanka Nandan M for all purposes.

I RISHIT THIMMAIAH, R/o G-1, Emerald Janeshwar, #28, ASM Road, Ulsoor Lake, Blore - 42 have changed my name to RISHHIT THIMMAIH for all purposes vide affidavit.

I Mangalore Lokesh S/o Babu R/O No-387, 14th Cross, KR road, Shastri Nagar, Bangalore 560028 have changed my name to LOKESH for all purposes.

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Protect lake from land mafia, citizens plead

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Encroachment of Varthur Lake and construction of structures in the buffer zone continues without any hurdles or restrictions. The residents complain that the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) officials have not taken any measures to stop the ongoing construction.

It is learnt that BBMP Marshals have also complained about the construction to the authorities, but nothing has been done to stop it. "Illegal constructions are in progress on the northern and southern side of Varthur Lake. We have complained to the authorities but they did not stop the construction of structures in the buffer zone on Siddapura and Balagere side. Corruption is rampant among the authorities. They failed to act tough, despite us bringing it to their notice many times. The authorities have ignored the buffer zone violations," said Jagadeesh Reddy of Varthur Rising.

Stating that the National Green Tribunal (NGT) too had rapped the authorities over buffer zone violations in the Bellandur Lake case and the Supreme Court concurred on the urgent need to remove such encroachments, Elangovan Kulandaivelu, an environmentalist, said the government agencies have to act quickly to put a stop to illegal constructions in the buffer zone. "They must clear any encroachments in the buffer zone of the lake," he said.

A resident of the area, who spoke to us on the condition of anonymity, blamed the BBMP for being negligent in protecting the buffer zone of Varthur Lake. "What is the use of spending crores of rupees for removing the silt if the buffer zone is not free from illegal constructions? The lake must be protected by keeping a vigil on land mafia that is ever ready to encroach on its land," the resident said.

BBMP Assistant Executive Engineer (Varthur Ward) told BM that he has visited the spot and instructed those involved to stop the construction in the buffer zone of the lake. "I am issuing a notice to those responsible for constructing the structures in the buffer zone. I will take measures to demolish those structures within a week," the BBMP assistant executive engineer said.

When informed, BBMP Chief Engineer Lokesh said he has received complaints from residents on the illegal construction of structures. "I have instructed the Executive Engineer and the Assistant Executive Engineer to take suitable measures against those responsible for putting up illegal structures in the buffer zone," the BBMP Chief Engineer said.

HEALTH TIP: Taking vitamin E orally seems to reduce some symptoms of PMS such as anxiety, depression, fatigue

Vitamin E is found in foods such as vegetable oils, cereals, meat, poultry, eggs, and fruits

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GLASS IS HALF FULL

Why a daily glass of milk could reduce bowel cancer risk – an oncologist explains

A glass of milk a day could help keep bowel cancer away – or so finds a study by Oxford University and Cancer Research UK. The research suggests that increasing daily milk intake by as little as one glass could have a significant impact on lowering the likelihood of developing bowel cancer.

There are nearly 45,000 cases of bowel cancer every year in the UK, making it the nation's fourth most common cancer – and third worldwide – but many of these are preventable.

According to Cancer Research UK data, 54% of all bowel cancers could be prevented by having a healthier lifestyle. Smoking, lack of exercise, alcohol, eating processed meat, and poor diet are all significant factors in the development of bowel cancer.

As an oncologist, I advise my patients about how diet and lifestyle can influence health, including the risk of developing cancer. But this research – one of the largest studies into diet and disease so far – has shed new light on how easy, cheap diet changes can help everyone to reduce their cancer risk.

For example, as well as drinking an extra glass of milk per day, reducing consumption of alcohol and red and processed meat could also help protect against cancer. The study found that drinking an additional 20g of alcohol a day, equivalent to a large glass of wine, increased bowel cancer risk by 15%. Consuming more than 30g of red and processed meat daily was linked to an 8% increase in bowel cancer risk.

Researchers took a novel, two-pronged approach to examine the association between milk consumption and bowel cancer risk. First, they analysed genetic data from over 542,000 women and focused on variants – tiny changes in DNA – associated with lactase persistence, the ability to digest lactose in adulthood.

Second, the team collected detailed dietary information from participants, including their daily milk intake. By combining these two data sets, the researchers were able to better estimate the causal effect of milk consumption on bowel cancer risk.

Striking results

The analysis revealed that participants who consumed an additional 244g of milk per day – roughly equivalent to one large glass containing 300mg of calcium – had a 17% lower risk of developing bowel cancer. This reduction in risk applied to various types of milk, including whole, semi-skimmed and skimmed.

Researchers found that the protective effect of milk consumption was independent of other dietary factors and lifestyle habits. This suggests that the benefits of milk in reducing bowel cancer risk are not because milk replaces unhealthy food choices or is consumed as part of an overall healthier lifestyle.

The reasons why milk consumption may reduce bowel cancer risk are not fully understood, but the researchers propose several potential explanations. First, milk is a rich source of calcium, which has been linked previously to a reduced risk of bowel cancer. Calcium may help protect against cancer by binding to potentially harmful substances in the gut and promoting the death of abnormal cells.

Next, many milk products are fortified with vitamin D, which has been shown to have anti-cancer properties and may help regulate cell growth and division. Also, the lactose in milk can promote the growth of beneficial gut bacteria that produce butyrate, a short-chain fatty acid with anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer effects. Finally, milk contains conjugated linoleic acid, a fatty acid found in meat and dairy products, which, according to a 2021 labratory study, could also have anti-cancer properties.

Crucially, milk consumption may not be suitable or beneficial for everyone. Those with lactose intolerance, milk allergies, or other dietary restrictions should consult with healthcare professionals before making significant changes to their dairy intake.

Overall, this groundbreaking research provides compelling evidence for the potential role of milk consumption in reducing bowel cancer risk. The finding that a relatively modest increase in daily milk consumption could lead to a significant reduction in bowel cancer risk is particularly encouraging. It suggests that small, achievable changes in diet could have meaningful impacts on public health.

As we continue to unravel the complex relationships between diet and disease, studies like this one provide valuable insights that can inform both individual health choices and broader public health strategies. The potential for a simple dietary change to have such a significant impact on cancer risk underscores the importance of continued research in this field and highlights the power of nutrition in shaping our health.

(By Justin Stebbing, Anglia Ruskin University, The Conversation)

MIRRORLIGHTS

Targeting brain's memory systems can help tackle overeating, obesity: Study

Worried about overeating? Blame the hippocampus -- part of the brain responsible for learning and memory -- as it may be behind your food craving and the resulting weight gain, according to a study on Wednesday.

The study, published in the journal Nature Metabolism, showed that neurons in the hippocampus are encoding memories of sugar and fat. This memory system is shaping feeding behavior and metabolic health.

Guillaume de Lartigue, from Monell Chemical Senses Center -- an independent nonprofit research institute in Pennsylvania, US -- identified, for the first time, the brain's food-specific memory system and its direct role in overeating and diet-induced obesity.

"In today's world, we are constantly bombarded with advertisements and environmental triggers designed to remind us of pleasurable food experiences," said Dr. de Lartigue. "What's surprising is that we've pinpointed a specific population of neurons in the hippocampus that not only forms these food-related memories but also drives our eating behaviour. This connection could have significant implications for body weight and metabolic health," the expert added.

The study explained that these neurons encode memories of the spatial location of nutrient-rich foods. These act as a "memory trace," particularly for sugar and fat. In a mice study, the researchers found that when these neurons were silenced, it impaired the animal's ability to "recall sugar-related memories, reduces sugar consumption, and prevents weight gain".

This was evident even when the animals were exposed to diets that contributed to excessive weight gain.

"Memory systems in the hippocampus evolved to help animals locate and remember food sources critical for survival," said first author Mingxin Yang, a University of Pennsylvania doctoral student in the de Lartigue lab. "In modern environments, where food is abundant and cues are everywhere, these memory circuits may drive overeating, contributing to obesity."

The study's findings open new possibilities for addressing overeating and obesity. The team called on to develop therapies to target hippocampal memory circuits. This may help disrupt the memory triggers that drive the consumption of unhealthy, calorie-dense foods.

"These neurons are critical for linking sensory cues to food intake," said Dr. de Lartigue. "Their ability to influence both memory and metabolism makes them promising targets for treating obesity in today's food-rich world."

—IANS

All you need to know about...

Retina link to stroke

Predicting risk of stroke
Blood vessels in the eye's retina can help predict risk of stroke as accurately as known risk factors, such as high cholesterol, without requiring invasive lab tests, according to a research.

Vascular fingerprint
The study, published in the journal 'Heart', described a 'vascular fingerprint', comprising 29 indicators of blood vessel health. Researchers, including those from The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, Australia, explained that the intricate network of blood vessels in the retina shares common physical features with those in the brain.

Specialised imaging
Therefore, the retina's blood vessels are an ideal candidate for assessing the damage caused due to chronic ill-health, such as diabetes, and the approach is implementable and well-suited for primary healthcare and low-resource settings, they said.

Indicators
The researchers found a total of 118 measures that could serve as indicators of stroke risk, of which 29 were significantly associated with risk of experiencing stroke for the first time.
Of the 29 indicators of stroke risk, more than half pertained to the density characteristic, eight to complexity, three to calibre (length, diameter of blood vessels), while one was related to twistedness.
A change in the density of the blood vessels in the retina was related with a 10-19 per cent increase in stroke risk, while a change in calibre with a 10-14 per cent increase.
Further, a decrease in complexity and twistedness of the retina's vascular network was associated with an increase in stroke risk by 10.5 per cent to almost 20 per cent.

—PTI

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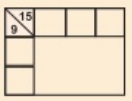
facebook.com/theBangaloremirror
@BangaloreMirror

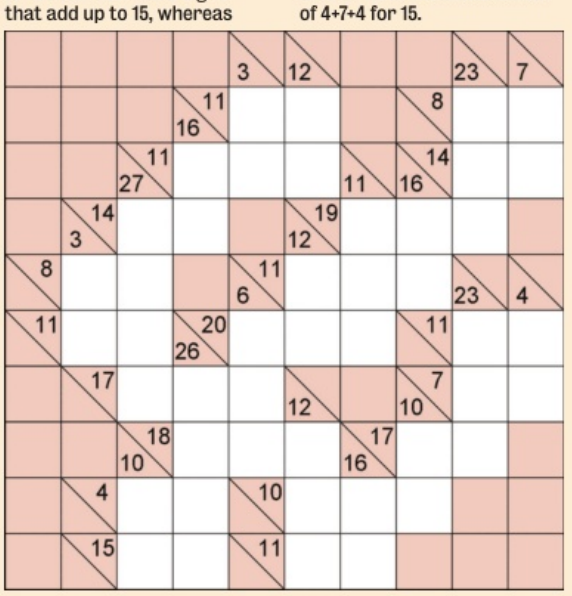
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

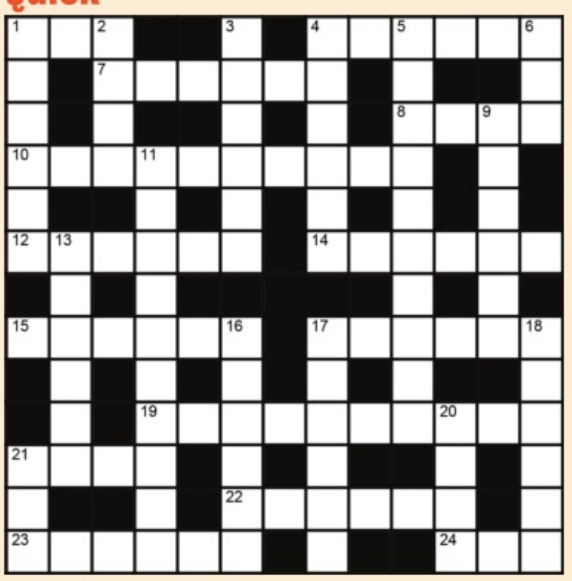


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Priestly vestment (3)
4 Great river (6)
7 Type of deodorant, should we say? (4-2)
8 __ __ cost / free? (2,2)
10 It is said to be better than cure! (10)
12 Aromas (6)
14 Pulled hard and violently (6)
15 Big-game hunt (6)
17 Shove (6)
19 In A B C... order, should we say? (10)
21 Assist or aid (4)
22 Having a low pH (6)
23 Scribble (6)
24 Light brown (3)

DOWN

1 Modifies (6)
2 Scottish hillside (4)
3 ___ oneself / takes up a position? (6)
4 Apply or treat with oil etc., embalm (6)
5 Experimental; pioneering (5-5)
6 Modern/ pref. (3)
9 The central pillars of winding staircases (6)
11 City art gallery that has a variety of paintings (10)
13 Fee (6)
16 Capital of Manipur (6)
17 Extremely sad (6)
18 Business magnate? (6)
20 Diplomacy (4)
21 Day divs. (3)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: P EQUALS G

OHZHCCRZHFUTKUL HU CHYHUP HZ QHUOHUP LSWL UF FUK GWU VKWCCA KYKV IK WPVKKHUP MHLS AFR GFTXCK. LKCA HU WUALSHUP .

Linemaro

If you were a basketball, I'd never shoot, because I would always miss you

Mindchow

In all chaos, there is a cosmos; in all disorder, a secret order

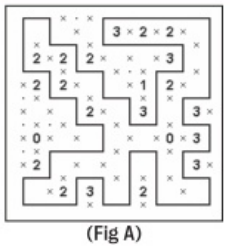
Joke of the day

An "acceptable" level of unemployment means that the government economist to whom it is acceptable still has job

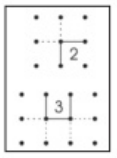
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)



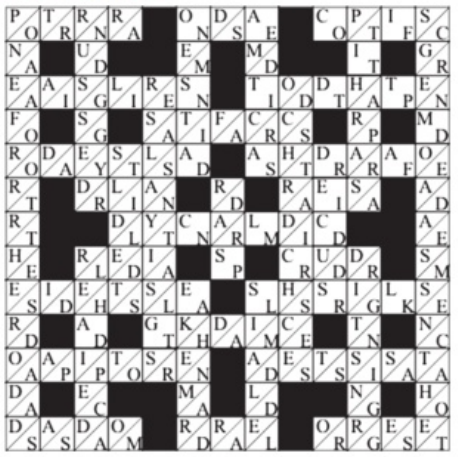
(Fig B) Not Allowed

How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				C
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

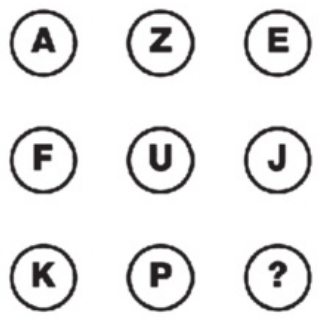
1 RA Bum; 6 I call; 7 In tat; 8 No ore; 9 Argue

DOWN

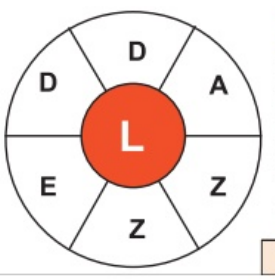
1 Lutra; 2 Ma IOU; 3 L Bing; 4 An ere; 5 Croat

Mensapuzzle

What is missing from the last circle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

07 Average; **08** Good; **10** Outstanding

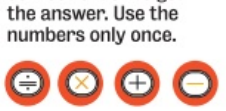
SudokuChallenge

7	4				5	9	3	
		8			2	5		4
5								
		9		7			5	3
			3		8			
4	7			9		1		
								9
9		7	2			3		
	6	2	9				7	5

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy = 1

1 2 5 5

Medium = 7

6 5 4 1

Hard = 25

3 4 8 3

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

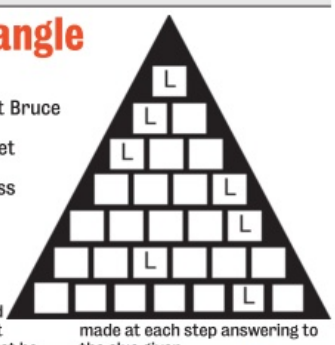
Differences: 1. Cabinet is wider. 2. Woman's hands are repositioned. 3. Skirt is longer. 4. Patch on jacket is moved. 5. Arm is longer. 6. Handle on pot is missing.

Riddler

What does this rebus represent? gloomy turquoise temperamental cyan sullen aquamarine despondent azure morose cerulean

Alpha triangle

1 Learner's plate
2 French article
3 Martial arts great Bruce
4 Stagger
5 Fisherman's basket
6 Edible stalk
7 Reuse or reprocess

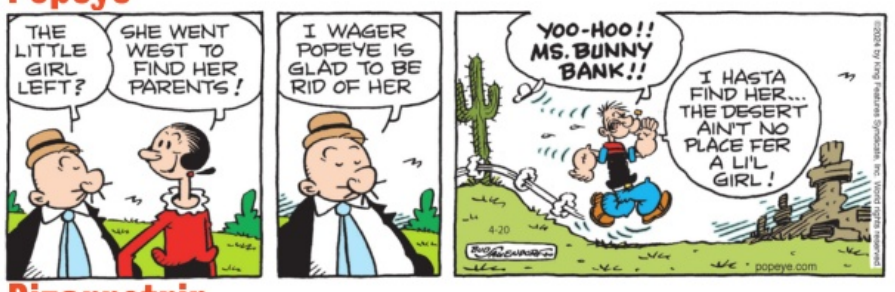


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


THE LITTLE GIRL LEFT?
SHE WENT WEST TO FIND HER PARENTS!
I WAGER POPEYE IS GLAD TO BE RID OF HER
YOO-HOO!! MS. BUNNY BANK!!
I HASTA FIND HER... THE DESERT AIN'T NO PLACE FER A LI'L GIRL!
4-20
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

ARE THERE ANY DOG CONSTELLATIONS?
OH, YEAH! THERE'S CANIS MAJOR RIGHT NEXT TO ORION!
CUTE! LET'S NAME IT RIPLEY, AFTER MY DOG.
OKAY THEN, I WANNA RENAME THE LEO CONSTELLATION SPOCK, AFTER MY CAT.
THIS IS WHAT THE ANCIENT GREEKS MUST HAVE FELT LIKE.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2024 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@COMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

THANKS FOR STANDING THERE WITH ME WHEN I TALKED TO THE BOOK BANNERS, ED.
I HOPE YOU COULDN'T HEAR MY KNEES KNOCKING.
THOSE WERE YOURS?
BATIUK & DAVIS
tombatiuk.com/books
10-11

Mutts

OKAY, BABY! LET'S HAVE SHOME SHWEET SYRUP!...
THE MAPLE SAP RUNS IN THE SPRING, MOOCH.
HMM... MY PANCAKES SHMIGHT BE A LIL COLD BY THEN.
mutts.com

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
With the moon's positive influence, you'll feel happy and optimistic today. Patience will guide you in your work, and you may receive rewards or incentives for your efforts. Family health issues will resolve, bringing peace of mind. Job seekers are likely to find good opportunities, and lovebirds will enjoy quality time together.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you'll feel inclined to help those in need, which will enhance your reputation in society. Implementing innovative ideas at work could lead to positive results, increasing your business. Lovebirds may plan an outing or adventurous trip together.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today is mixed. Dissatisfaction may arise as you struggle with detachment from responsibilities, leaving you confused. You must avoid hypothetical plans and focus on practical work to complete tasks on time. Taking care of your parents may also be important today. It's advisable to delay any migration plans for now and wait before making any big moves.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, enthusiasm and focus will fuel your progress, helping you catch up on delayed projects. Your siblings might assist you in starting a new venture that could bring profits soon. You may also go on a short trip related to family matters. Job seekers could receive good news about new opportunities.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today is a good day. You'll successfully manage your spending, particularly on unnecessary items, improving your financial situation. Creativity will shine today, helping you decorate your home or office and elevate your social status. Lovebirds may receive support from their families to nurture their relationship. Students may hear good news about their academics.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you are blessed by the moon; you'll have peace of mind even amidst work-related stress. Your inner calm will help you balance everything, allowing you to enjoy both work and domestic life. New sources of income may emerge, boosting your savings.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you may feel a bit dull and face some lingering health issues. Tiredness might cause irritability, affecting domestic harmony. Financial losses could arise if you don't carefully consider financial decisions. It is advised that you think twice before committing to any financial transactions today.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Inner strength will guide you today, and past losses could turn into profits, boosting your business growth and liquidity. With the help of your subordinates, you'll confidently make difficult business decisions. Your work performance may be praised, and you could receive incentives that will enhance your savings.

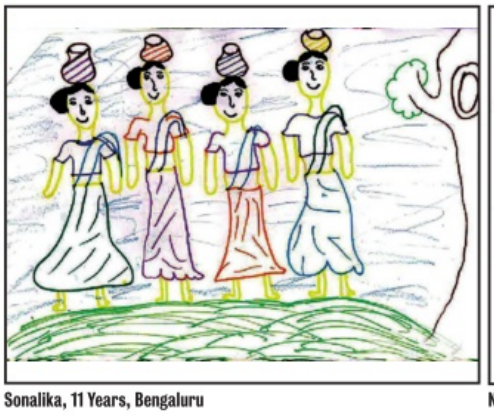
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you will be busy at work; the day's learnings will benefit from your wisdom, helping you make the right decisions that will increase your business. A big order may come through, expanding your workload. You may also invest in creative assets. Creativity will be useful as you renovate your home or office, improving your social standing.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, you'll find that situations are under control, and you'll emerge from any previous difficulties with patience. This calm will reflect in your work and domestic life. You may plan an outing, and students will maintain good focus on their goals. Singles could meet someone special through friends or relatives.

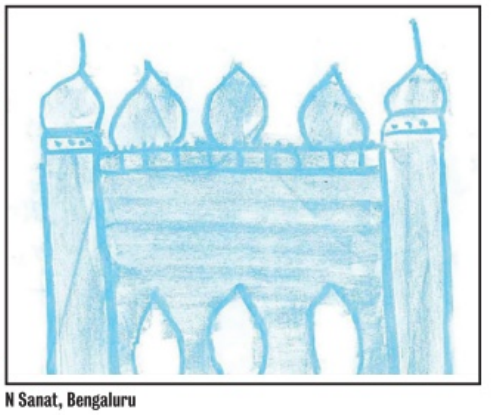
Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
You may feel unhappy today, and mood swings could affect your personal and professional life. Impatience and arrogance at work may create hidden enemies. It's important to stay calm. You are also advised to avoid rash driving to prevent accidents

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Happiness surrounds you today, bringing harmony to your personal life. Romantic moments with your spouse will deepen your connection. Your family will support you in making important decisions, and you might take key steps forward in your career. New ventures or business partnerships could be on the horizon.

KIDZONE



Sonalika, 11 Years, Bengaluru



N Sanat, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
2√½
2√½
2([√1]/[√4])
1

BULL'S EYE
addle, dale, dazzle, lade, laze, lazed, lead, zeal

STRIKE OUT
DAZZLED, deal, lade, laze, lazed, lead, zeal

QUICK

S	C	R	A	W	L		C			T	A	N
		P				A	M	A	Z	O	N	
		R			A	C	I	D	I	C		O
	H	E	L	P		H		G			A	O
	G		A	L	P	H	A	B	E	T	I	C
	R			T	M		R		D			Y
S	A	F	A	R	I		T	H	R	U	S	T
	H			K				A			L	
S	C	E	N	T	S		T	U	G	G	E	D
	T		E		T		N		T		W	
P	R	E	V	E	N	T	I	O	N			E
D		R	O	L	L	O	N		V		A	T
A		A		A		O		A		T		O
A	L	B		P	A	M	A	Z	O	N		

FAST FIVE

U	M	B	R	A
L	I	L	A	C
T	A	I	N	T
R	O	N	E	O
A	U	G	E	R

QUOTE UNCODE
Disillusionment in living is finding that no one can really ever be agreeing with you completely in anything.

ALPHA TRIANGLE
L, Le, Lee, Reel, Creel, Celery, Recycle.

SUDOKU

7	4	1	8	6	5	9	3	2
3	9	8	7	1	2	5	6	4
5	2	6	4	3	9	7	8	1
2	8	9	1	7	4	6	5	3
6	1	5	3	2	8	4	9	7
4	7	3	5	9	6	1	2	8
8	3	4	6	5	7	2	1	9
9	5	7	2	8	1	3	4	6
1	6	2	9	4	3	8	7	5

MENSA PUZZLE
O. Start on the top left and move down, then right one space and up etc in a snakes pattern. Letters advance through the alphabet in steps of 5.

RIDDLER
The Moody Blues

GO FIGURE
Easy
2 - 5 + 5 - 1 = 1
5 + 6 x 1 - 4 = 7
Medium
3 x 8 + 4 - 3 = 25
Hard

LOOP

KAKURO

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BAFTA pick
'All We Imagine As Light' nominated for Best Film Not in English Language at 2025 BAFTA Awards

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Good response

The team of Forest is elated over the tremendous response from audiences to the trailer of the movie. The two-minute 15-seconds- long trailer released on YouTube on January 10 has left audiences curious. The interesting element of the trailer is that it has Tamil and Telugu dialogues.

"I am very happy with the response. I have been receiving phone calls for the last three days. The trailer has become a success," said director Chandramohan.

Forest is Chandramohan's fourth movie. "The film was shot in the forest for 80 days. I am confident audiences will support this movie as they can relate to the story," Chandramohan said.

The director thanked all the cast and crew for their cooperation and hard work. "Shooting in a forest is very difficult. The movie has turned out well. The credit goes to all the cast and crew," he said.

Leading lady

Keerthi, the daughter of Usha Krishna and niece of Sandalwood hero Sharan, is on cloud nine about getting an opportunity to share screen space with actor Shreyas Manju. Keerthi is paired opposite Shreyas in the movie Dildar directed by Madhu Gowda Gangur.

"I am blessed to have an opportunity to share the screen space with Shreyas Manju. He is a great actor. Despite having acted in three Kannada movies, he was very cooperative and gregarious on the sets. The whole team of Dildar made me comfortable during the shooting. The shooting of the movie, except for one song, is completed. The director is planning to shoot the song outside the state," said Keerthi.

Keerthi hails from a family that has theater and movie background. "I played the daughter of my aunt Shruthi in Sri Naga Sakthi that was released in 2010. Later, I did not act in movies as I wanted to focus on education. I have completed BBM. I am also acting in Devaru Ruju Madidanu, helmed by Simple Suni," Keerthi said.

Elaborating on her role in Dildar, Keerthi said it is of a bold college girl character. "The movie is a beautiful love story set in the backdrop of a college," she said.

UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT

Nargis says she left B-Town due to some bad episode that she prefers to not talk about

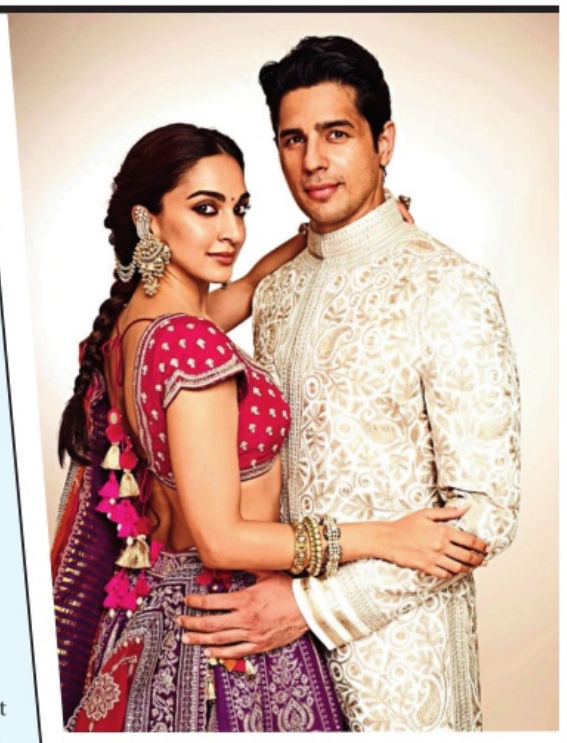
Nargis Fakhri is still remembered as the 'Rockstar' girl. While her pairing opposite Ranbir Kapoor in this Imtiaz Ali movie will forever be memorable, the actress was also a part of some other movies like 'Main Tera Hero'. In a recent interview, Nargis has revealed that there was this situation which made her leave the industry a few years ago.

She told Subhash K Jha, "I encountered an unfortunate situation that caused me to not be able to come back to Bollywood. I do not want to talk about that. These factors of having to pander to the male ego is international so, no it did not cause me to recoil or leave Bollywood. Although this is not true for all people in the industry. I have met and worked with some wonderful people and really appreciate them."

The actress also spoke about how she adapted to Bollywood and the culture here. She also found dancing quite difficult here at first but slowly adapted to it. However, she always thought that the tag 'item girl' or 'item song' had quite a negative tone to it. Nargis said, "I completed a song and dance with Shahid Kapoor in Phata Poster Nikla Hero and then Varun Dhawan in Main Tera Hero. Even the terminology 'item song' is new to me. When people say a girl is doing an item song they mean it in a not-so-nice way. Bollywood dancing is as alien to me as Hindi. I am just enjoying learning it. There is a lot of heaving, which I found difficult at first. But I was okay after a while. There are so many people indulging in so many activities on the sets. Come to think of it, everything here in Mumbai is culturally very different from everywhere else."

> "These factors of having to pander to the male ego is international

Nargis is set to make her comeback with 'Housefull 5'. —ETimes



BIRTHDAY OUTING

Actor Sidharth Malhotra and his wife, actress Kiara Advani, were spotted at the Mumbai airport on Tuesday morning, seemingly heading off on a vacation ahead of Sidharth's 40th birthday on January 16. In videos shared by paparazzi, the lovebirds were seen arriving at the airport in style. Kiara looked stunning in a grey V-neck sweater paired with white pants. The 'Shershaah' actress left her hair open and completed her chic look with dark sunglasses and a red handbag. Sidharth, on the other hand, complemented her style with a black T-shirt, a matching jacket, jeans, and dark sunglasses. The couple were also seen smiling at the paps as they headed into the airport.

On the work front, Kiara was recently seen in 'Game Changer' alongside Ram Charan. The actress is also set to star in the much-awaited films 'Don 3' and 'War 2.'

Sidharth too has a busy year ahead. **ANI**

Parineeti gives a sneak peek into her shoot diaries

Parineeti Chopra is busy filming her forthcoming project with Netflix. Piquing the interest of netizens, the diva has been regularly sharing sneak peeks from her shoot diaries on her Instagram stories.

Continuing the trend, Parineeti Chopra recently posted a fresh set of insights into her schedule. She shared a BTS still from the set with the caption "The night shoot hustle continues". The 'Kesari' star further dropped pics of an autorickshaw, along with the night sky. Parineeti Chopra's Instagram stories also included a still from her vanity saying, "Van Ke Andar Se Hi". Meanwhile, her last post was with a hot water bag as she wrote, "Never without my" in the caption. Prior to this, Parineeti Chopra shared a photograph from the shoot at the Bandra Worli Sea Link in the post captioned, "Second schedule starts. Cute location today".

Going by the sources, the 'Daawat-e-Ishq' actress is shooting for the second schedule of the untitled drama at the moment. Any further details regarding the project's cast and crew have been kept away from the limelight for now.

Apart from her Netflix drama, Parineeti will also be a part of Anurag Singh's anticipated thriller Sanki. — **IANS**

Sealed with a kiss

Actor Hugh Jackman is cementing his relationship with his girlfriend Sutton Foster as the two were spotted sharing a passionate kiss.

This comes just days after their new romance finally came to light, reports 'Mirror.co.uk'.

The Hollywood actor, 56, and Broadway icon, 49, sparked rumours of a romance for several months in 2022 when they both starred on stage in 'The Music Man', fueling this further when both their marriages ended.

As per 'Mirror.co.uk', after much speculation, the pair appeared to confirm their relationship last week as they were spotted holding hands during a date night in Santa Monica, California. Just days later, Hugh and Sutton didn't hold back on the PDA as they were captured sharing a heated kiss. In photos obtained by Mail Online, the pair were photographed in the car while at a San Fernando In-N-Out as they repeatedly kissed each other. Sutton was spotted tentatively holding Hugh's face during the passionate moments as they waited for their fast food order. —IANS